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SUBJECT: GOS FOLLOWS UP ON MILINKEVICH COMMENTS

REF: A. BRATISLAVA 961

[1](#)B. BRATISLAVA 966

[1](#)1. (U) The GOS is beginning to carry out the commitments made to Belarussian opposition leader Alexander Milinkevich during his December 9 visit. On December 14, the Slovak Parliament approved a resolution that condemned the Lukashenko government for repressing political dissent, and called for the release of Aleander Kozulin and all other political prisoners. The resolution was introduced by Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Boris Zala (Smer) and Human Rights Committee Chairman Laszlo Nagy (SMK), as they promised in their meeting with Milinkevich. Parliament approved the resolution unanimously, with two SNS members abstaining by voting 'present'. (Note: Parliament later that day approved a resolution condemning the holocaust conference in Tehran. The vote was unanimous with no abstentions. End Note.)

[1](#)2. (SBU) Also, in response to the December 9 meeting between Milinkevich and Minister of Foreign Affairs Jan Kubis, the MFA has taken first steps toward developing stronger programs to build civil society in Belarus. Upon arriving in Brussels, Kubis convened a December 11 meeting with representatives of V-4 countries and the Baltic states to discuss future cooperation on Belarus. Early reports suggested that these seven countries wanted to propose to the European Union creation of a fund to strengthen civil society in Belarus (reftel A), but conversations with the MFA's Belarus/CIS desk officers indicate that these reports may be premature. In January the MFA will meet to decide how it can strengthen support to Belarus using its tools at hand, such as increasing SlovakAid discretionary funding for activities in the country or redirecting Visegrad Fund resources toward Belarus. In any case, MFA has indicated that they wish to increase emphasis on independent media promotion and student exchanges within the region.

VALLEE